

TOWN OF PLYMOUTH MEETING MINUTES
MAY 8, 2023 – VIA COUNCIL CHAMBERS
7:00 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Brian Roth

Mayor Roth called the meeting to order and welcomed all attendees. Councilman Wobbleton led with prayer and Mayor Roth led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Roth announced that the Town Attorney, Natalia Isenberg would not be present at the meeting; however, Patrick Scott from Teague Campbell will be taking her place.

PRESENT	ABSENT	COUNCILMEMBER
X		Mayor Roth
X		Mayor Pro-Tempore Spencer
X		Councilman Boston
X		Councilwoman Byers
X		Councilman Tharps
X		Councilwoman Williams
X		Councilman Wobbleton

** NOTE: Minutes were recorded by Town Manager Floyd as Town Clerk Wallace was absent from the meeting.*

II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mayor Roth asked for any additions or deletions for the agenda. Town Manager Floyd stated that Closed Session could be removed. Councilwoman Byers stated that she had not had a chance to get together with the Town Manager and the Town Clerk regarding minutes for March 13th and March 27th. Mayor Pro Tempore Spencer stated that if minutes need to be corrected they should be changed before the Council. Councilwoman Byers gave a brief history of how minutes used to be corrected and stated that she was not comfortable with what needed to be addressed; however, it was also established that the Town Clerk and Town Manager are okay with bringing forth any changes before the Council. After discussion about public records and processes, it was determined that the minutes would be corrected during the meeting. A motion was made to approve the agenda with the exception of removing Closed Session by Councilwoman Byers with a second by Mayor Pro Tempore Spencer. The motion passed unanimously.

II. PRESENTATIONS TO THE COUNCIL

Mr. Tom Harrison gave an update on the Bear Festival and the Harbor Town Project.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Crystal Davis addressed the Council about 25 tenants at Pine Forest Apartments that are being displaced and as a result will be homeless. Ms. Davis asked what the Town Council will do about this issue as elected officials. Town Manager Floyd stated that staff contacted the County and are looking for ways that the County and the State can give assistance. Ms. Davis shared her research that included speaking with management as well as USDA. She also stated that it is not fair for a private entity to come to Plymouth and be allowed to do as they please. Mayor Roth asked if anyone else was present to speak about this matter. Mrs. Cassandra Brown signed up to speak and was invited to the podium, after which time Mayor Roth would revisit Ms. Davis' concerns.

Mrs. Brown spoke about brown goods and garbage that had not been picked up for quite some time. She named other areas that have things that have been put out and have not been picked up.

Mayor Roth returned to the topic of tenants having to vacate the property that Ms. Davis referred to by June 15th. He referred to a letter that had been received and asked if it had been reviewed by Counsel. Mr. Scott stated that he reviewed it briefly before the meeting and that historically the situation was one of a landlord-tenant issue. Mr. Scott stated that without seeing the lease he could not offer any advice. Councilwoman Byers suggested that the tenants might have to look into the contracts that were signed by tenants and obtain some legal advice. Mr. Scott stated that there are legal aid shops that could possibly assist the tenants. Councilwoman Byers also suggested that calls be made to their Congresspersons and Senators, both State and Federal. Councilwoman Williams asked if the Town could do anything to delay the removal of the tenants. Mayor Roth suggested that the issue be differed to the Town Attorney and the Town Manager to try to find a positive outcome. Mayor Pro Tempore stated that she spoke with Town Manager Floyd earlier, and that all that is available for housing at this point are waiting lists. Town Manager Floyd stated that she reached out to the Housing Authority as well as Commissioners Ann Keyes and Tracey Johnson to see if anything could be done in regard to emergency housing. After continued discussion, Mayor Roth stated that one of Congressman Davis' staff members will be in the area, and that will be a good time to bring this federal issue up. He also asked that Town Manager Floyd follow up.

IV. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

1. Financial Report

Town Manager Floyd gave the Finance Report for the period ending April 30, 2023, which was included in the Agenda Package. She stated that the budget should be on track. Town Manager Floyd stated that another budget meeting will be held within the next week or two.

2. Police Department

Chief Williams updated the Council in reference to the increase in shots fired and arrests that have been made. He reported that there are a lot of teenagers involved, however he stated that the Department continues to work with other agencies to get this situation under control. A discussion took place as to where the guns came from. Chief Williams explained that the guns were stolen and being purchased by girlfriends and wives that are eligible to purchase the guns and given to the perpetrators. Continued discussion took place regarding age groups and whether or not the gangs reside in town or come from other places. After answering, Chief Williams reiterated that he is trying to bring parents, community members, and the faith based community together to get everyone on the same page to try to make a difference in what has been happening.

3. Code Enforcement

Code Enforcement Officer Brown presented the report that was included in the Agenda Package. He also answered questions regarding trash on the side of the road in different areas. The Mayor stated that the Town cannot continue to allow the situation with the trash to continue and asked that staff come up with a holistic approach to take care of this issue.

4. Town Projects/Public Works

Assistant Public Works Director Arnold presented the report that was included in the Agenda Package. He answered questions regarding yard debris and when it can be picked up. Assistant Public Works Director Arnold explained that one of the trucks needs repair, and as a result they are behind schedule.

5. Fire Department

Captain Arnold thanked the Council on behalf of Chief Miller for the funds that were granted for the storage building. He explained that the building had been ordered. Captain Arnold also reported on the projects that the Department has undertaken in order to educate children. There will also be

some fundraisers in the works. Councilwoman Byers mentioned that perhaps a newsletter could be sent out with water bills for the purpose of recruitment of volunteers. Mayor Pro Tempore added that it is a good idea to show young people that it would be a positive thing to participate in.

All other reports were included in the agenda package.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda included:

A. APPROVAL OF MARCH 13, 2023 REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Councilwoman Byers asked for the following corrections:

- Mayor Pro Tempore's name should be changed from Brooks to Spencer.
- Mayor Roth's name should appear at the top of the Council list, and then the rest of the Councilmembers should be listed in alphabetical order.
- Page Six, Item G, a motion was made with a second by Councilman Tharps, but it was not stated who made the motion.
- Item H, Dr. Moss' book, the Albemarle Ram was discussed, and it was not involved in the massacre of the African Americans downtown, and it is misleading the public that it is still in the minutes. Councilwoman Williams clarified that she did not state that it was built for the massacre, but it partook in the massacre. Mayor Roth disagreed; however, made it clear that what transpired at the meeting was what was written.

A motion was made to approve the March 13, 2023 Regular Town Council Meeting Minutes as presented with corrections by Councilwoman Byers with a second by Councilman Wobbleton. The motion carried unanimously.

B. APPROVAL OF MARCH 27, 2023 SPECIAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES

Councilwoman Byers asked for the following corrections:

- Page one – change Mayor Pro Tempore's name from Brooks to Spencer.
- Rearrange the order of elected officials.
- Page three, second paragraph, remove the word "be"

A motion was made to approve the March 27, 2023 Special Town Meeting Minutes as presented with corrections by Councilman Wobbleton with a second by Mayor Pro Tempore Brooks. The motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made amend the agenda to readdress the Minutes of March 13, 2023 Regular Town Meeting Minutes by Mayor Pro Tempore Spencer with a second by Councilman Tharps. The motion passed unanimously.

Councilwoman Byers asked for the following correction:

- F. Change Councilman Danny Boston to Councilman Gregory Boston

A motion was made to revise the just approved minutes for the March 13, 2023 Regular Town Council meeting minutes by Mayor Pro Tempore Spencer with a second by Councilman Wobbleton. The motion passed unanimously.

C. APPROVAL OF APRIL 11, 2023 REGULAR TOWN MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made to approve the April 11, 2023 Regular Town Meeting Minutes by Mayor Pro Tempore Spencer with a second by Councilman Wobbleton. The motion passed unanimously.

D. APPROVAL OF APRIL 24, 2023 SPECIAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES

Councilwoman Byers asked for the following correction:

- Change Mayor Pro Tempore's name from Brooks to Spencer

A motion was made to approve the April 24, 2023 Special Town Meeting Minutes as presented with corrections by Councilwoman Byers with a second by Councilman Wobbleton. The motion carried unanimously.

E. APPROVAL OF MAY 1, 2023, SPECIAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES

Councilwoman Byers asked for the following correction:

- Change Mayor Pro Tempore's name from Brooks to Spencer

A motion was made to approve the May 1, 2023 Special Town Meeting Minutes as presented with corrections by Councilman Wobbleton with a second by Mayor Pro Tempore Spenser. The motion carried unanimously.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. CONSIDERATION TO AUTHORIZE EXECUTION OF THE PROPOSED CONTRACT WITH THE ALBEMARLE COMMISSION TO PROVIDE PLANNING SERVICES

Town Manager Floyd explained that a contract with the Albemarle Commission to provide planning services was included in the Agenda Package and gave the terms of the contract in reference to planning and zoning. Town Manager Floyd asked for authorization to execute the contract. A motion was made by Councilwoman Byers to authorize Town Manager Floyd to execute the contract with a second by Councilwoman Williams. The motion passed unanimously.

Note for the Record – Councilman Boston arrived at 8:31 p.m.

B. DOG PARK

Town Manager Floyd explained that she researched other dog parks and any liability that could accompany having a park. She stated that there did not seem to be a problem with owners cleaning up behind their pets. Town Manager Floyd reported that if the Town moves ahead with the park, the rules be clearly posted. Mayor Pro Tempore Spencer asked if economic development increased after putting in a dog park. Town Manager Floyd stated that those she spoke with have more to do with recreation, as in being near a park, not off the beaten path, and not just a stop and go dog park. After continued discussion Mayor Pro Tempore Spencer stated that she thinks that a park is a nice idea; however, instead of regarding improving the economy because of a dog park, the idea of opening the movie theatre would help. She reiterated that reaching out to more people than those passing by on Hwy 64, but to those within the town would make a difference. Councilwoman Byers reminded the Council that the DDA will use the money that they raised. Mayor Pro Tempore still asked that the DDA pick an area beside Water Street. Discussion about approaching DOMTAR was raised, and after continued discussion, a motion was made by Councilwoman Williams to have staff approach the Travel and Tourism Authority to fund any shortfall for the dog park on East Water Street and partner with the DDA and have staff under Mayor Pro Tempore Spencer's guidance ask DOMTAR and any other companies that might want to help with funding for a dog park at Riverside Plantation. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Byers. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

A. PART F GRANT UPDATE

Town Manager Floyd reported that the application was submitted on May 1st by 5:00 p.m. and the Town should receive notification in a couple of months.

B. AUDIT

Town Manager Floyd reported that the auditors were in the office during the past week and are in the process of working on the 2021 – 2022 audit. She further reported that the auditor received notification from the LGC stating that they did not accept the auditor's reason that the audit is late. When asked why the audit is late, Town Manager Floyd answered that there were issues with his staff.

C. DMV

Town Manager Floyd reported that there was an interview with DMV last week in Rocky Mount and that it will go to their Commissioners for a decision. She stated that the interview went well. Town Manager Floyd reported that the Town should receive a decision in a couple of weeks.

D. LEADS

Town Manager Floyd reported that a few fellows have been chosen and will be coming for interviews either at the end of May or the beginning of June. Once chosen, the fellow will begin working in August. When asked by Mayor Pro Tempore Spencer what the fellow would be doing, Town Manager Floyd explained that the fellow would assist with grant writing, updating the Town's Ordinance Book, working on the Harbor Town Project, the Underground Railroad as well as several other projects. Mayor Pro Tempore stated that she spoke with Town Manager Floyd earlier about economic development and that the Town has a composite list of industrial and building sites, whether they are public or private that can be placed on a list serv so that potential developers and investors can see that there is potential for growth in the Town. Town Manager Floyd agreed and updated the Council on what progress is being made in that area. Mayor Roth added that the businesses located in Plymouth need to be pinned on a google map with information about the building and that it should be added to the Town's website. Councilwoman Byers added that the airport, boat docks, lighthouse and things of that nature should be added.

VII. TOWN ATTORNEY'S REPORT

No report at this time.


VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilman Boston stated that he attended a meeting with tenants that had to leave their homes and how hurt they are. He also reported that the grass at Pine Forest is very high, and the garbage has not been picked up. Councilman Boston reiterated to the constituents that both he and Councilman Womble were there to serve them and if they had any concerns to contact either one of them. He also suggested seeking assistance from legal aid and the NAACP. Mayor Roth and Councilmembers filled Councilman Boston on what took place earlier in the meeting in reference to Ms. Davis speaking and the recommendations given.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made by Councilman Boston to adjourn with a second by Councilwoman Williams. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Dorenda Wallace
Clerk

Brian Roth
Mayor